

Remarks

Introduction

Claims 1-28 are pending in the application.

Claims 2-4, 6-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-24, and 26-28 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1, 11, 15, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Stronach U.S. Patent 6,722,980 (hereinafter "Stronach").

Claims 5 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Stronach in view of Acres et al. U.S. Patent 6,364,768 (hereinafter "Acres").

Claims 1-28 have been amended to more particularly define the invention. No new subject matter has been added and the amendments are fully supported and justified by the specification. (See e.g., applicants' specification at page 12, line 6 to page 14, line 16 and applicants' FIG. 3.)

Applicants' Reply

Claims 1, 11, 15, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Stronach. Claims 5 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Stronach in view of Acres. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

According to applicants' amended independent claims 1 and 15, a wagerer is determined to be recognized based on one criterion of a plurality of criteria. Each criterion of the plurality of criteria is associated with a different incentive. When the wagerer is determined to be recognized based on the one criterion, the wagerer is provided with the incentive associated with that criterion. For example, when a wagerer is recognized for opening a new wagering account, the wagerer may be provided with a free amount of wagers, but instead when the wagerer is recognized for placing his first wager,

the wagerer may be provided with a special congratulations and good luck message. (See Id., page 12, lines 6-25).

Stronach refers to a wagering system that facilitates wagering on race events. Upon the submission of a wager, the wagering system of Stronach may provide a prize to a user that is distinct from any payout that would be provided for a winning wager. These prizes of Stronach are provided either randomly or based on the cumulative amount of wager submissions received from one or many wagering terminals. (See Stronach, column 11, lines 6-14). The prizes may include, for example, a credit to the users wagering account or other types of prizes (See Id., column 10, line 66 through column 11, line 5). However, Stronach does not show or suggest that there is any connection between the reasons that a prize is provided and the types of prizes that are provided.

Therefore Stronach does not show or suggest (a) that each criterion of a plurality of criteria is associated with a different incentive and (b) when a wagerer is determined to be recognized based on a criterion, an incentive is provided to the wagerer that is associated with that criterion, as specified by applicants' amended independent claims 1 and 15.

Accordingly, because Stronach fails to show or suggest every limitation of applicants' amended independent claims 1 and 15, the rejection of claims 1 and 15 over Stronach under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) should be withdrawn.

Claims 5, 11, 19, and 25 depend from amended independent claims 1 and 15, respectively. Accordingly, for at least this reason the rejection of dependent claims 5, 11, 19, and 25 should also be withdrawn.

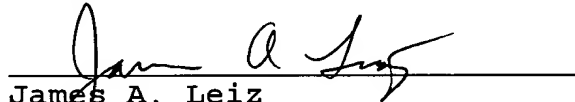
Claims 2-4, 6-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-24, and 26-28

Claims 2-4, 6-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-24, and 26-28 were withdrawn from consideration because no generic claim was found to be allowable. However, as demonstrated above, generic independent claims 1 and 15 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request consideration and allowance of claims 2-4, 6-10, 12-14, 16-18, 20-24, and 26-28.

Conclusion

For at least the reasons set forth above, applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Leiz
Reg. No. 46,109
Attorney for Applicants
Fish & Neave IP Group
ROPES & GRAY LLP
Customer No. 1473
1251 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10020-1105
Tel.: (212) 596-9000